

**Comments on the proposed adoption of Berestneff, 1904 as the author of *Leucocytozoon* (Protista, Haemosporida) and of *Leukocytozoen danilewskyi* Ziemann, 1898 as the type species**

(Case 3089; see BZN 56: 168–170; 57: 39–42)

(1) John R. Baker

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As former editor of the *Transactions of the Royal Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene*, I am writing to support the application by Dr Gediminas Valkiūnas to conserve the nominal genus *Leucocytozoon* Berestneff, 1904 with *L. danilewskyi* (Ziemann, 1898) as the type species. This action will resolve a problem that has long beset researchers in this field as well as editors of relevant journals.

(2) M.A. Peirce

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I offered a fairly detailed response to this issue (BZN 57: 39–41), but there is one point which perhaps requires further comment. Valkiūnas and also Tatjana Iezhova (BZN 57: 41–42) place some emphasis on Bennett having changed his mind regarding the validity of *L. danilewskyi* subsequent to the taxonomic review paper by Bennett et al. (1975), because this species and not *L. ziemanni* (Laveran, 1902) appeared in the 1982 publication by Bennett et al. Iezhova also points out that 10 years later in Bishop & Bennett (1992) *L. ziemanni* is given as the valid name for the parasite of Strigiformes in line with the 1975 review paper and that *L. danilewskyi* is mentioned as an invalid synonym.

In point of fact, Bennett did not change his mind regarding the validity of *L. ziemanni* as the type species. Both the 1982 and 1992 publications are host-parasite checklists published internally by the university in which the International Reference Centre for Avian Haematozoa (IRCAH) was then located. Both checklists were printed from the computer data base which had been updated by numerous individuals and which contained numerous errors and omissions. The appearance of *L. danilewskyi* in the 1982 edition as the valid name was an oversight which was corrected in the 1992 edition. Neither Bennett nor the IRCAH had changed their opinion since the key review paper of 1975.

Iezhova attached some significance to the usage of *L. danilewskyi* by several Russian authors, but this should be viewed with caution as some workers fail to follow the basic rules of the Code. My use of *L. danilewskyi* and not *L. ziemanni* in a conference paper (Peirce, 1981) was in error since I was working in Zambia at the time and did not have my reprint collection available.

(3) Gediminas Valkiūnas

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Dr Peirce in his comment (above) explains that some of the apparent inconsistencies by Bennett (1982) and by himself (1981) in the name of the type species of *Leucocytozoon* are based on errors. This perhaps emphasises the importance of the Commission making a ruling on this matter so that the authorship of the nominal genus and the name of its type species can be definitively resolved.